

AGE FRIENDLY SAN DIEGO ACTION PLAN: Building a Vibrant and Equitable City for Everyone to Age Well



October 2021



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

TODD GLORIA

MAYOR

September 24, 2021

As Mayor of the City of San Diego, I am committed to supporting the Age Friendly San Diego initiative and this dynamic, forward-thinking action plan. It is a viable plan that will immediately contribute to the quality of life of everyone who lives and works in the City of San Diego.

We must prepare for our rapidly aging population with policies that enhance healthy aging, civic participation, respect and social inclusion, mobility, and appropriately designed housing and public facilities. I congratulate and commend the City of San Diego's Parks and Recreation Department for spearheading these efforts along with our university partner, San Diego State University's Social Policy Institute, and AARP.

Age Friendly San Diego team members worked diligently for the past two years (including through the global coronavirus pandemic) to engage the community to identify priority areas and create goals and objectives that will enhance the well-being of people of all ages. An initiative of this magnitude relies on a variety of contributors, including: San Diego City Council, City of San Diego departments, community-based organizations that serve and advocate for older adults, and the Housing Commission. Most importantly, we heard directly from a broad cross-section of diverse residents through far-reaching community engagement activities, offered in a variety of languages.

Over 3,500 intentional community interactions have been made between a Community Engagement Survey, Age Friendly San Diego Communities Survey, eight in-person listening sessions, COVID-19 community survey, and nine virtual action planning sessions. This action plan was available for public comment and the planning team reviewed all comments, revised the plan accordingly, and has submitted this Action Plan to the San Diego City Council for approval.

Together, I look forward to creating an inclusive Age-Friendly San Diego.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Gloria".

TODD GLORIA
Mayor
City of San Diego



Contents

Executive Summary

- Age-Friendly Movement
- What Age Friendly San Diego is; Why a plan is needed
- How the Action Plan was Developed
- Livability Domains, Goals and Objectives At-A-Glance
- Implementation with Accountability as Approved by City Council

Introduction to the Action Plan

- Community Profile
- What is Age Friendly San Diego?
- Existing Building Blocks for Livability

The Strategic Path to an Age Friendly San Diego.....

- Impetus for the Action Plan
- How the Action Plan was Developed with Diverse Communities in Mind
 - a. Policy Scan
 - b. Community Surveys
 - c. Listening Sessions
 - d. Action Planning Sessions
 - e. Public Review
- Action Plan Oversight and Accountability

Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan Overview.....

- Domains of Livability
- Themes of Livability Going Forward:
 - Livability: Affordable Housing, Transportation, and Healthy Food
 - Community Linkages: Representation, Information & Referrals, Volunteerism
 - Outreach and Communication: Clear Messaging, Promote Services, Staff Training
 - Expand Programming: Intergenerational Activities, Fitness, Lifelong Learning
 - Safety: Increase Lighting, Assist with Home Modifications, Increase Walkability
 - Access to Technology: Free Wi-Fi, provide Devices and Training

Call to Action

Acknowledgements

References

Appendices: (Not included for Public Review, will be included in the final Action Plan)

- A. Age Friendly San Diego Full Action Plan
- B. 2020 San Diego Policy Scan
- C. Age Friendly San Diego Community Survey
- D. Age Friendly San Diego Progress Report
- E. Outreach Materials

Executive Summary

Consistent with its designation as “America’s Finest City” and the commitment to every resident having the opportunity to live safely, build better health and thrive, San Diego, California became part of AARP’s Livable Communities Network in 2019. This initiative is an affiliate of the World Health Organization’s Global Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, an international effort launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for their own and the world’s growing population of older adults. AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities targets improvements in eight (8) domains that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. Over the course of the past two (2) years, with input from a diverse cross-section the City of San Diego residents, the Age Friendly San Diego project team has prepared this Action Plan to help make the City of San Diego a more vibrant, equitable and livable community for all ages.

During the process, residents were asked to complete an online assessment of livability perceptions, then attend one of eight (8) listening sessions to provide deeper perspective on what was already working for older adults, and where there were gaps. Results of the survey (along with additional related, relevant surveys) and listening sessions were presented to residents for verification and additional input, then to City staff so they could prepare to mobilize next steps. (The demographics of survey respondents, and limitations of the survey are presented in Appendix D: Age Friendly San Diego Progress Report.)

Parks and Recreation City staff, with support of the Age Friendly San Diego project team, determined that the baseline survey results, and initial input pointed to six (6) key domains of livability most relevant to the City of San Diego:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social & Civic Participation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Community Health & Wellness

A vital component of this process was to gather community input from diverse perspectives in order to define the plan details. The baseline survey was available in five (5) languages (English, Chinese, Tagalog, Spanish, Vietnamese), and focus groups were conducted to oversample underrepresented populations. Collectively the community gave input on suggested actions to fulfill the proposed goals and objectives, with recommendations on possible action steps. The draft Action Plan was available for public review and comment from October 1- October 14, 2021. City staff provided additional input on actions, metrics, and timelines. By intention, this has resulted in an Action Plan that is not solely a “to do list” for City staff, rather a template for shared responsibility with community leaders and residents.

Another key feature of the Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan is that it is aligned with and complementary to existing City and County Plans, as well as to the State Master Plan for Aging. The goal was not to duplicate plans or actions already underway or being planned, rather to highlight where planned actions could do more to take into account the needs of a rapidly aging population.

Age Friendly San Diego Goals, Objectives, and Actions At-A-Glance

Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A citywide interconnected park system that fosters social interactions and play for people of all ages. 2. Residents will have well-maintained, safe, and active public spaces near where they live that offer meaningful programming options. 3. Increase livability, safety, and walkability throughout San Diego.
<p>Objectives/Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize and allocate funding for improving current and creating future facilities, programs, and services that are age-friendly. ▪ Increase urban tree canopy to provide increased aesthetics and shade. ▪ Promote community awareness, engagement, participation and use of local active public spaces, including plazas, pocket parks, and parklets. ▪ Ensure adequate lighting, informational signage, and comfortable, accessible seating. ▪ Create comfortable, safe, shaded spaces for people to rest and socialize with accessible pedestrian paths on all routes. ▪ Make pedestrians a priority; ensure hazard-free roadways, pathways, and sidewalks.
Domain 2: Social & Civic Participation
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand recreation and social activities for older adults to support healthy aging. 2. Help bridge the digital divide by increasing access to technology. 3. Increase opportunities and improve visibility of volunteer positions for older adults.
<p>Objectives/Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate current programs offered for City of San Diego older adults and identify gaps. ▪ Expand fitness, education, creative arts, and social gathering opportunities for older adults. ▪ Promote recreation and social activities for older adults. ▪ Increase older adults' access to technology. ▪ Educate older adults on how to use technology. ▪ Enhance City of San Diego volunteer infrastructure. ▪ Expand inclusion and diversity of volunteer opportunities available to all older adults in the City of San Diego. ▪ Promote volunteer opportunities for older adults.
Domain 3: Respect & Social Inclusion
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equitable access to City services, public parks, libraries, and recreation facilities while recognizing and celebrating diversity. 2. Develop new and enhance existing opportunities for intergenerational activities that include older adults. 3. Expand overall integration, visibility, and consideration of older adults in City activities and services.

Objectives/Actions:

- Work towards the City of San Diego becoming a national leader in social equity.
- Increase diversity of locations at which structured social opportunities are offered.
- Encourage activities celebrating diversity in the community.
- Widen the programmatic reach of existing intergenerational activities.
- Promote and explore both existing and future intergenerational activities.
- City activities and services will be designed and marketed with an age-friendly lens.
- Encourage age-friendly customer service and integrate older adults' voices in City activities and services.

Domain 4: Housing**Goals:**

1. All residents have access to housing transition options across all income and accessibility levels.
2. Neighborhoods are safe and have convenient nearby amenities (parks, libraires, etc.).
3. Older adults have the choice and ability to age comfortably where they choose, have access to necessary services (such as: food, transportation, medical), and feel a sense of community and connection.

Objectives/Actions:

- Support and incentivize access to affordable/livable housing, increasing the housing stock in the City of San Diego for older adults.
- Increase universal design housing options and knowledge of minor home safety modifications.
- Promote the development of accessory dwelling units including accessible units.
- Increase lighting, specifically near homes, businesses, and along sidewalks.
- Improve walkability and access to transit to create "complete neighborhoods."
- Create and activate neighborhood amenities, such as pocket parks and plazas.
- Enhance education about housing options and housing services available in the City of San Diego.
- Promote, support, and partner with organizations which provide in-home services to older adults.

Domain 5: Transportation**Goals:**

1. Expand mobility choices throughout the City of San Diego, including alternative transportation methods, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, contributing to a regional approach.
2. Strive for all forms of transit, including active transit (biking, walking, etc.) to be accessed safely.
3. Expand transportation options designed for older adults and promote their use.

Objectives/Actions:

- Expand and increase citywide bicycle ridership.
- Increase community confidence in public transit ridership.
- Support and educate on alternative transportation methods.

- Reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries by applying traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds.
- Educate San Diego older adults on transportation safety trainings.
- Ensure adequate lighting, signage, and hazard free roadways, pathways, and sidewalks.
- View transportation systems not only as a method of moving about the County but also as a means for older adults to stay connected to the community.
- Educate the older adult community on various transportation options and ADA transit certification process.
- Ensure that older adults have access to appropriate transit in all San Diego communities.

Domain 6: Community Health & Wellness

Goals:

1. Promote awareness and knowledge of available and accessible health and well-being related resources.
2. Expand the scope and number of City of San Diego Parks and Recreation sponsored/co-hosted health related events, programs, and activities to educate and improve physical and mental health.
3. Align with the City's Complete Communities initiative in creating healthy communities with access to support and healthcare services.

Objectives/Actions:

- Promote community health and wellness services, events, and education.
- Enhance education about personal emergency preparedness and City/County emergency services.
- Increase number of older adult programs, seasonal activities, and events that foster health and wellness.
- Decrease isolation and loneliness among older adults.
- Facilitate access to training and awareness of dementia and mild cognitive impairments.
- Develop and implement practices for responding to identified need for healthcare and support services.
- Create pathways for older adults to easily access food.

Implementation and Accountability This entire section is a placeholder pending Mayor's Office input.

This Action Plan outlines the goals, objectives, and potential actions and suggested time frames to be accomplished by elected officials, municipal departments, residents and numerous community/civic organizations working together toward the goal of making the City of San Diego a vibrant, equitable, livable community. Once approved by City Council, Domain Teams will be accountable to the goals and objectives. They will review and adapt actions and timeline as needed to align with the City's Master Plan, Policy priorities, and budget cycles. An annual progress report will be delivered to the City Council and AARP in November 2022 and 2023 with a final report in November 2024.

DRAFT

Introduction to the Action Plan

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities is the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program that was launched in 2006 to help localities prepare for rapid growth of an aging population. Currently the global network includes over 44 countries and 1,114 cities worldwide. In the United States, the AARP Network serves as a catalyst to inform, involve, and recognize the successful efforts that make communities livable for



residents of all ages. There are eight (8) states, which California is the newest member, and over 562 communities actively involved and striving to enhance livability.

AARP works directly with stakeholders and local governments to promote programs and influence systems that support them to create more livable environments for residents of all ages and abilities. It focuses on actions that foster the full participation of older people in community life and promotes the health and well-being of all ages.

City of San Diego, California became part of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities in 2019 and agreed to explore common challenges across the Eight Domains of Livability:

The Social Environment:

- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

The Built Environment:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

City leadership recognizes that by 2035 the number of San Diego residents over 65 will significantly increase by 106% (since 2012), with 42,844 being over 85 years old, and is committed to making San Diego more vibrant, equitable and livable for residents of all ages. In an effort to engage residents, community leaders, and staff to review policies and successful programs, the City of San Diego, led by the Department of Parks and Recreation, partnered with The San Diego Foundation, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, AARP, and the San Diego State University (SDSU) Social Policy Institute to develop this Action Plan. Since work on this project began, SDSU has developed the Center for Excellence in Aging & Longevity (CEAL) and is committed to leveraging relationships to support and promote the ongoing age-friendly journey of the City of San Diego.

Community Profile

San Diego is known for its beaches, parks, world-famous attractions, and warm climate. This Southern California border town is a great place to live and one of the best tourist destinations to visit year-round. Balboa Park is the site of the renowned San Diego Zoo, as well as numerous art galleries, artist studios, museums, and gardens. The concentration of military/defense assets is considered number one in the world. A deep harbor is home to a large active naval fleet, with the USS Midway, an aircraft-carrier-turned-museum, open to the public. San Diego is a diverse community with more than 100 languages spoken and a multitude of ethnicities. With so many appealing traits, it is no wonder why San Diego is a growing, vibrant city.

By 2035, it is estimated that the City of San Diego will incorporate approximately 212,342 new residents, 81,525 new housing units, and 66,297 new jobs based on SANDAG's Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast.

What is Age Friendly San Diego?

San Diego Population Trends:

- 2010 San Diego pop. 1,301,611
- 2020 San Diego pop. 1,540,000
- 2030 San Diego pop. 1,690,000
- 2040 San Diego pop. 1,820,000
- 2050 San Diego pop. 1,950,000

The City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department spearheaded the Age Friendly San Diego initiative to identify and promote improvements that could make Parks and Recreation more supportive, not only of older adult residents, but residents of all ages. The City of San Diego Parks and Recreation 2020 Parks Master Plan lays out a guiding vision “to bring the many benefits of great parks and recreation opportunities to all City residents and visitors”—thus creating a “Play Everywhere for Everyone” concept. In addition, older adult programming is included as a key deliverable for the department moving forward. Unique to the City of San Diego because it was led by Parks and Recreation, there is a related vision within each domain to guide the livability enhancements that will be implemented by this department.

In addition to this focus, the Parks and Recreation Department's AgeWell Services team (55+ programming) also provided the leadership to engage and align city and community partners who hold commitment, resources, and the mandate for responsiveness to the community's expressed needs, in this case, primarily those of older adult constituents. While development of the plan was led by Parks and Recreation, all relevant City Departments and the Mayor's Office were actively engaged, contributed to the plan development, and will have responsibility for implementation of the plan overall.

Soon after the onset of COVID-19, the landscape of San Diego's communities, the nation, and the entire world has greatly changed. The Parks and Recreation staff pivoted to provide essential services to at-risk residents, facilities and parks were closed to ensure social distancing, and the City's AgeWell Services team reached out by telephone to isolated older adult residents to provide socialization and connections to supportive services. Navigating through this historical time required compassion and

unity among all ages and is essential to re-establishing a thriving society. For the first time since the inception of the Age Friendly Communities Initiative, “proof of concept” was required to demonstrate that authentic and meaningful engagement with older adults could occur through an almost entirely virtual platform.

Existing Building Blocks for Livability

San Diego residents and business owners recently affirmed that they believe the city is already a great place to live and work. The Age Friendly San Diego initiative gave significant consideration to the existing values and city planning efforts that are already in place and has sought to develop an action plan that aligns with, rather than duplicates them, while amplifying the voice of community. Early in the project, a policy scan was conducted by reviewing the existing thirteen (13) City plans to map what was already in place in line with AARP’s domains of livability. Those efforts were further cross referenced to the World Health Organization’s *Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities*.

The resulting policy scan aligned San Diego assets (defined as positive characteristics or resources) within each domain of livability. The online baseline assessment for the most part validated assets that had been identified. Features of Age-Friendly Cities that did not emerge as strong were incorporated into the listening sessions and action planning to elicit ideas on how to strengthen existing efforts and fill gaps. *(A full copy of the 2020 San Diego Policy Scan is provided in Appendix B.)*

In addition to conducting a policy scan that guided efforts initially and throughout the process, the Age Friendly San Diego project team incorporated the findings into a composite of what is already in place to build on. In a later section of this report, the following are listed by domain (see pp 19-36), but are presented here to provide a “big picture” composite view:

- Active lifestyle supports aging with vitality and livability factors are well documented
- Strong recreation infrastructure in place
- Recreation services and programming expansion is already planned and underway
- Robust transit infrastructure & mobility strategies in place
- Transit designed for individuals with specialized mobility needs must expand
- Affordable and livable housing resources for older adults exist, but not in sufficient supply
- Older adult programming and civic engagement opportunities in the City of San Diego are aligned with what older adults want and need
- San Diego strives for diversity, equity, and inclusion and is making progress
- Health risks of isolation and loneliness are significant, and are exacerbated by social distancing necessary during a pandemic and contributes to a digital divide
- Preventative screening and education work, but older adults need help to access services
- Community health resources, specific San Diego health concerns, and community safety protocols are well documented

The Strategic Path to an Age Friendly San Diego

The City of San Diego embraced the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program and agreed to serve as a catalyst to educate, encourage, promote, and recognize improvements that could make San Diego more equitable and even more livable (by building on what is already in place), not only for older residents but for residents of all ages. This section describes the Blueprint, or process, led by the Department of Parks and Recreation, that will result in an Age Friendly San Diego.

Impetus for the Action Plan

The focus on a more livable City of San Diego has evolved from key events that have consolidated into the current, ongoing effort. For well over a decade, a focused interest in improving the health and well-being of San Diego residents. This is particularly relevant given the experience of the 2020/21 global pandemic and a recent intensified focus on equity and social justice. The County of San Diego's campaign *Live Well, San Diego* provides the overarching goal that guides and has inspired this Action Plan. Opportunities such as an updated Parks Master Plan and AARP support to become a livable community strengthened wellness efforts that were already underway. The City's other municipal plans align well with the Age Friendly San Diego initiative and include providing a safe community; continuing to improve high quality municipal services; revitalizing neighborhoods and corridors; enhancing recreation and quality of life opportunities; facilitating effective and efficient traffic circulation and transportation; and safe and affordable homes for all current and future residents.

2009-2021 County of San Diego's Live Well

- *Live Well San Diego* is a vision for a region that is Building Better Health, Living Safely and Thriving. It aligns the efforts of individuals, organizations and government to help all 3.3 million San Diego County residents live well. This initiative inspired efforts to support health, wellness and vitality throughout the region.

2018-2021 Visionary Parks Master Plan

The Parks Master Plan identifies senior programming as a priority, focusing on multi-generational and accessible spaces, low-impact and wellness-oriented activities and life-long learning for older adults. It inspires and aligns well with Age Friendly San Diego.

2018 San Diego Invited to Join Age-Friendly Network

- The San Diego Foundation's Age-Friendly Communities Program in partnership with Del Mar Healthcare and AARP asked the City of San Diego to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Endorsed by San Diego's Mayor, a press conference was held in December 2018 to launch the effort and generate community interest and involvement.

2020

Park de la Cruz Community Center Opens

- In 2015, the City of San Diego made a commitment of a complete remodeling project of what is now Park de la Cruz Community Center in City Heights, which was designed specifically as a gathering place for older adults (AgeWell Services) and individuals with disabilities (Therapeutic Recreation Services) to increase social, fitness, cultural and educational opportunities. Over 8.5 million in CDBG funding was utilized to update the 1956-33,000 square foot complex, which includes 4 multi-purpose rooms, an industrial kitchen, fitness center, media room, children's playroom and playground, dance and sensory rooms, gymnasium, ballfield, skate park, and picnic areas.

2020/21

Virtual Engagement/Digital Divide

- The COVID -19 global pandemic shifted the means and methods of community engagement for City staff and community providers. Virtual engagement was widespread, yet also accentuated the needs of persons and communities, particularly communities of color, who were disproportionately impacted.

Coming Soon

AgeWell Older Adult Programming Toolkit

- A toolkit is under construction and will assist Parks and Recreation staff to provide meaningful program opportunities for older adults throughout the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department. AgeWell Services' staff, along with community partners will assist with program implementation and educating staff on the awareness of meeting the needs of older adults.
- Following initial implementation, the toolkit will be reviewed, and if found to be relevant, offered to other City and community partners for use with their constituency.

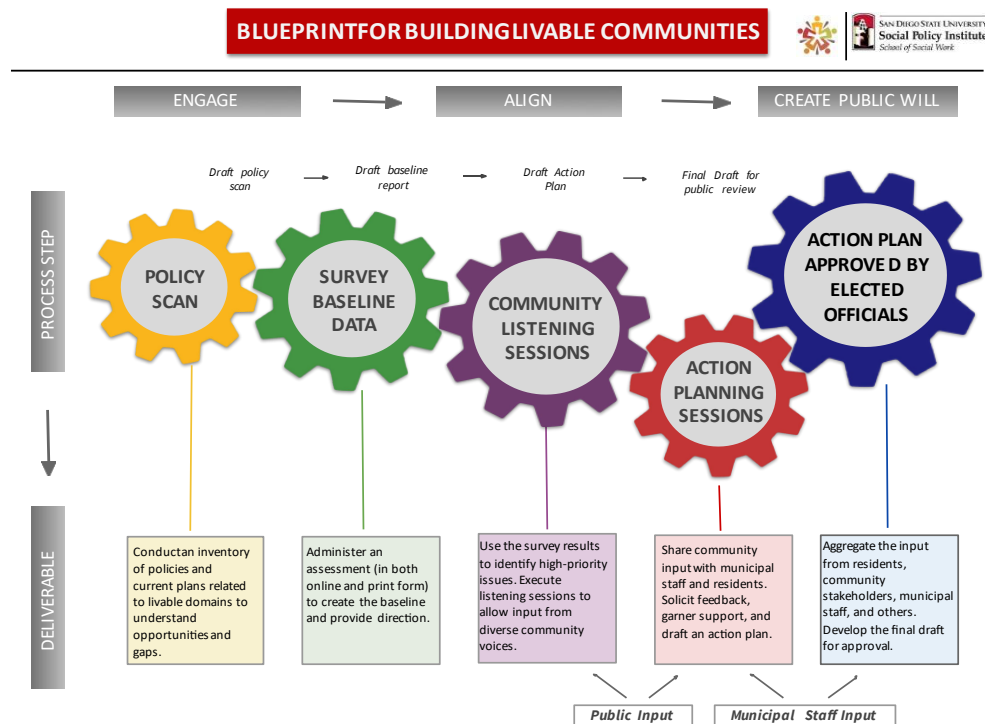
How the Action Plan was Developed with Diverse Communities in Mind

San Diego, California became part of the AARP's Livable Communities Network in 2019. The City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department spearheaded the Age Friendly San Diego initiative to identify and promote improvements that could make Parks and Recreation more supportive, not only of older adult residents, but residents of all ages. The resulting Action Plan reflects rich community and City staff involvement. The diversity of older adult residents and emerging needs were specifically addressed, so the plan represents the authentic voice of people San Diego, including those

who speak a primary language other than English, those who experience food and housing insecurity, and those who are increasingly isolated without access to technology. It is hoped that the actions that result from the plan will make a

difference in the quality of life for all ages. The Age Friendly San Diego project team followed the steps required by AARP for certification, as mapped by San Diego State University Social Policy Institute. Of note is that San Diego State University has developed the Center for Excellence in Aging & Longevity (CEAL), and through it is prepared to support all Age Friendly Communities in the region, including the City of San Diego.

The Age Friendly San Diego project team solicited broad input from City of San Diego residents, City staff and community partners. The steps of engagement and alignment were accomplished as follows:



How did we learn about older San Diegans?



POLICY SCAN

The City of San Diego Policy Scan was completed in December 2019 to review and highlight City and County of San Diego plans and policies which support an Age Friendly San Diego and where there are gaps.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

- **City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department Staff Survey** was administered on-line in fall 2019. Forty-seven staff responded and provided feedback on the facilities and available programming for older adults.
- **City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Community Interest Survey, available in English and Spanish** was administered fall 2019 and was available on-line and paper versions. A total of 596 patrons 55 years old and older responded from all Parks and Recreation facilities, providing feedback on their interest in recreation activities, scheduling preference, ability to access, and type of programming.

AGE FRIENDLY SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY SURVEY

Launched in October 2019 and closed in December 2019, the Age Friendly San Diego Community Survey collected demographic information on the respondents and provided an opportunity for respondents to provide direct feedback on the various domains. A total of 1,790 surveys were complete and met criteria to be analyzed from City of San Diego residents 50 years old and older. The survey was available in on-line and paper versions, and was translated into Chinese, Tagalog, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Staff was also deployed to various locations to encourage residents to complete the surveys and to answer any questions. In addition, outreach was completed through a variety of San Diego aging network outlets, including: AARP social media blast to City of San Diego members,

collaborating with ethnically-diverse community based organizations to share the survey with their stakeholders, e-blast via the County's Aging & Independence Services and City AgeWell services, and leveraging social media.

LISTENING SESSIONS

Age Friendly San Diego Listening Sessions were held during January and February 2020. A total of eight (8) listening sessions throughout the City of San Diego were completed in conjunction with community partners. The sessions were a follow up to the Age Friendly San Diego Community Survey and meant to gain a deeper understanding of priorities and challenges facing older adults. There was a strong turnout - 223 individuals attended the sessions which were held at Community Senior Centers, low-income senior living residence, library, and Balboa Park.

To gain as representative a sample as possible given the scope of the project, oversampling was conducted. This included one focus group conducted in Spanish, and one specifically for individuals who were currently or recently unhoused.

Listening Session were promoted through the San Diego County aging network and co-hosted with the following partner organizations:

- City of San Diego AgeWell Services
- Cathy Hopper Clairmont Friendship Center
- San Ysidro Senior Center
- City Heights Weingart Branch Library
- George L. Stevens Community Center
- La Jolla Community Center
- Serving Seniors, Potiker Family Senior Residence
- San Diego Rescue Mission

COVID-19 COMMUNITY SURVEY

In preparation for the pivot to virtual platform for the Action Planning sessions to follow, and to understand how the needs of older adults changed during the COVID-19 global pandemic, a community survey was conducted. Respondents were asked about virtual programming, access to technology, new or exacerbated needs, and under what circumstances they would consider returning to in-person programming.

Out of 421 responses, 72% indicated they had an interest in virtual programming, however only one in three participate. Nearly 90% had access to reliable internet, but 16% did not access it at all, and close to 30% indicated they did not know how to operate a device to access virtual meetings.

It was determined that people of color were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the Community Survey bore that out. This survey revealed that 1 in 3 Latinx are not at all comfortable using the internet and only 17% were willing to ask for help in using it. Finally, one in five Latinx respondents (43%) indicated concerns regarding food insecurity.

ACTION PLANNING SESSIONS

At the end of 2020, Age Friendly San Diego—led by City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department's AgeWell Services—finished a draft of the Action Plan that outlined the vision, goals, and sample actions of six livability domains. The draft's content was based on feedback from about 2,700 survey respondents and 223 in-person participants from eight (8) listening sessions. To ensure that Age Friendly San Diego project team correctly understood the community and was on the right track with the Action Plan recommendations, community members were encouraged to provide feedback on the draft. The themes of livability determined through community input were incorporated into the action plan and may be summarized as:

- **Livability:** Affordable Housing, Transportation, and Healthy Food
- **Community Linkages:** Representation, Information & Referrals, Volunteerism
- **Outreach and Communication:** Clear Messaging, Promote Services, Staff Training
- **Expand Programming:** Intergenerational Activities, Fitness, Lifelong Learning
- **Safety:** Increase Lighting, Assist with Home Modifications, Increase Walkability
- **Access to Technology:** Free Wi-Fi, provide Devices and Training

To provide feedback, nine (9) virtual action planning sessions were held to capture the sentiment. Due to the COVID-19 limitations, all of the action planning sessions were virtual and conducted via Zoom. To ensure that the feedback reflects San Diego's diversity, the action planning sessions were advertised with community centers all over the City and hosted in partnership with those centers. It was also advertised with AgeWell Services and the County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services distribution lists, social media (Facebook, LinkedIn), community contacts, and other organizations who serve older adults.

A total of 147 residents joined the virtual sessions, with an average of 16 people per session. Since the sessions were only about an hour long, only three (3) domains were discussed per session. One of the sessions was held entirely in Spanish, and another was held with older adults recently experiencing homelessness. The sessions had a mix of residents that had previously interacted with Age Friendly San Diego, and first-encounter participants.

Overall, the Action Plan draft received positive feedback. The vision, goals, and sample actions for the livability domains were well-received by the residents. No sessions requested any of the items to be replaced or changed. The discussion summary by domain is detailed in the following paragraphs.

Public Review

An Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan public review and comment virtual launch event was held on September 27, 2021. Over 50 community members attended the event and were engaged in

providing feedback. The draft Action Plan was available for public review and comment from October 1- October 14, 2021. The community, along with City staff, provided additional input on actions, metrics, and timelines. By intention, this has resulted in an Action Plan that is not solely a “to do list” for City staff, rather a template for shared responsibility with community leaders and residents.

Action Plan Oversight and Accountability Placeholder pending input from Mayor’s Office

The first step of implementation is for City staff to operationalize key tasks and calendar for planning purposes and accountability. This will include developing an evaluation plan for regular progress reporting by key departments, metrics, or measures of success. A continuous quality improvement (CQI) process will be implemented, and the resulting data can be used to direct and improve implementation. An annual report will be delivered to the City Council and AARP in November 2022 and 2023 with a final report in November 2024.

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Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan Overview

The Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan was developed to increase livability with vitality and equity for people of all ages, with particular attention paid to the City's evolving needs based on the percentage of adults 50 years old and older of age rapidly increasing. This plan is intended to complement, rather than duplicate existing City and County Plans, as well as California's Master Plan on Aging. The Age Friendly San Diego project team gathered data from the community through a series of Community Conversations (Listening Sessions), a project survey, and several related surveys that provided detail on particular domains.

The Age Friendly San Diego project team gathered data from the community through a series of community engagement activities, including recreation, community, and COVID-19 surveys; in-person listening sessions; mid-project report public comments; and virtual action planning sessions. Additionally, the team analyzed data from the AARP Livability Index for the City of San Diego, national best practices, and conducted a policy scan from adjacent City documents and plans.

Domains of Livability

The pages that follow lay out the plans in each domain area using the following template:

Domain Definition	Details what this domain is/entails; shared language helps to build shared understanding.
Vision	What is desired to happen/be in place once this plan is complete; describes future aspirations.
What We Heard	Key findings from the baseline assessment survey, community listening sessions, policy scan and other relevant existing data, including the 2019 Community Opinion Survey.
What We Know	Key assets that are already in place and available to build on; includes programs, services, City plans and facts (data) regarding the population.
What We Will Do	Goals (what we want to achieve) and objectives (what will result or be in place) for each domain. (Note the associated actions, metrics and timeline are found in Appendix A.)

Refer to Appendix A for the full Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan.

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Definition- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings focuses on the availability of safe and accessible recreation locations and public facilities.

Vision- San Diego is a city with beautiful, iconic, outdoor active spaces with quality buildings accessible for all.

What We Heard

Older adults in San Diego want to pursue an active lifestyle because they know it supports their ability to age with vitality. When it comes to outdoor spaces and facilities, older adults particularly need level thoroughways (to help avoid fall risk), well-lit areas (to increase sense of safety), and want to know what is available to them, when, and where.

Active Lifestyle Supports Aging with Vitality

- People love that the weather in San Diego is conducive to enjoying the outdoors nearly year-round; they want public spaces that are appropriate for older adults to help them do that.
- Walking is the number one outdoor activity. Additional seating, shade, wayfinding signage, and access to restrooms are all features that would increase comfort.
- Almost all reported that it is very important to them to stay physically active.

Design Age-Friendly Facilities and Advertise their Availability

- Given the increased fall risk for older adults, sidewalks, especially those in disrepair, are a major concern for personal safety and accessing the outdoors. In communities where sidewalks are present, have curb cuts, are well lit, and are free of trip hazards, people report a greater sense of safety and increased accessibility of public outdoor spaces.
- Consistent lighting greatly increases a sense of safety for older adults.
- Too few designated handicapped spaces and lack of parking in general was identified as a barrier to participating in activities.
- Majority of older adults do not know about the Parks and Recreation facilities nearest to them. The presence of homeless individuals creating encampments and/or residing in the parks was also seen as a barrier to accessing public facilities.

What We Know

The City of San Diego is home to recreation centers throughout the city, a robust public library system, and supports a significant urban park system. Although most community recreation centers currently primarily focus on youth activities, the City of San Diego is committed to promoting better access to parks and recreation for older adults.

Strong Recreation Infrastructure in Place

- The City of San Diego operates 58 different recreation centers in various parts of the community.
- The City of San Diego operates 36 public library locations in various parts of the community.
- The City of San Diego offers a wide range of activities, including: 13 aquatic complexes, 4 visitor centers and nature centers, 10 skate parks, extensive civic dance program, and 3 municipal golf courses.
- Outdoor activities abound within the 42,000 square feet of recreation space: over 400 parks, and 200 miles of trails, making San Diego the second largest urban park system in the United States.

Availability of Recreation Services and Programming

- AgeWell Services, a division of the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department, offers programming for older adults, primarily at Park de la Cruz Community Center located in City Heights and Balboa Park Senior Lounge.
- Therapeutic Recreation Services, a division of the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department, offers supportive programming for individuals with disabilities, primarily at Park de la Cruz Community Center located in City Heights.
- Most community recreation centers currently primarily focus on youth activities.
- The City of San Diego is committed to “promoting equity through easier and better access to parks and recreation.” The overall goal is to access a park within a 10-minute walk, 20-minute bike ride, and a 30-minute transit ride for everyone. (Parks Master Plan)

What We Will Do

- **Goal 1.1:** A citywide interconnected park system that fosters social interactions and play for people of all ages.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Prioritize and allocate funding for improving current and creating future facilities, programs, and services that are age-friendly.
 - Increase the urban tree canopy to provide increased aesthetics and shade.
- **Goal 1.2:** Residents will have well-maintained, safe, and active public spaces near where they live that offer meaningful programming options.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Promote community awareness, engagement, participation, and use of local active public spaces, including plazas, pocket parks, and parklets.
 - Ensure adequate lighting, informational signage, and comfortable, accessible seating.
- **Goal 1.3:** Increase livability, safety, and walkability throughout the City of San Diego.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Create comfortable, safe, shaded spaces for people to rest and

socialize with accessible pedestrian paths on all routes.

- Make pedestrians a priority; ensure hazard-free roadways, pathways, and sidewalks.

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Social & Civic Participation

Definition- Social & Civic Participation focuses on access to leisure and cultural activities, including opportunities for all residents to socialize, engage with their peers, and participate in volunteer activities.

Vision- San Diego is a community where older adults have social opportunities to gather, share talents, and meaningfully interact with people of all ages.

What We Heard

Older adults enjoy leisure and cultural activities in San Diego offered at a variety of times, days, and locations. Individuals seek engagement and volunteer opportunities but sometimes find it difficult to identify and nurture meaningful connections.

Access to a Variety of Leisure and Cultural Activities Highly Desired

- Older adults desire a variety of social activities, fitness, creative arts, and lifelong learning opportunities.
- A wide range of days/times were identified as favorable options for activities, with Monday-Friday, 9am-12pm as the most often requested.
- Cost and location were noted as factors that influence attendance.
- There is an interest in facilitated activities between college students and older adults.

Legacy Sharing of Time and Talents

- Community elders would like more opportunities to share their life experiences and connect with a diverse group of people.
- Some intergenerational activities, with various ages (not just children) are viewed as important and good opportunities to feel connected with the larger community.
- Some older adults enjoy volunteering but find it difficult to find local volunteer placement and training information.
- Outreach and marketing for social and civic opportunities must be conducted by multiple methods, as older adults access information in a variety of ways. Electronic (Internet), print, in-person communication, 211, community/recreation centers, and word-of-mouth were all cited as sources.

What We Know

The City of San Diego offers a wide range of activities designed for older adults throughout the city. A multitude of community organizations, along with the City of San Diego, promote active aging through diverse programming and opportunities for civic engagement.

Older Adult Programming Opportunities in the City of San Diego

- AgeWell Services, division of the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department, offers programming for older adults, primarily at Park de la Cruz Community Center

- location in the City Heights neighborhood.
- There are currently 13 Senior Centers, hosted by a variety of organizations, operating within the City of San Diego. ¹
 - San Ysidro Senior Center, Neighborhood House Senior Center, Fourth District Senior Resource Center, Gary & Mary West Senior Wellness Center, Balboa Park Senior Lounge, Park de la Cruz Community Center, Bay Terrace Community & Senior Center, College Avenue Center, Peninsula Shepherd Center, La Jolla Community Center, Cathy Hopper Friendship Center, Mira Mesa Senior Center, and Ed Brown Center for Active Adults
 - The various Senior Centers promote healthy, active aging through diverse programming, access to community resources, and on-site nutrition services.
 - High quality free adult education (55+) is offered at some locations in collaboration with the San Diego College of Continuing Education Emeritus program. ²
 - The City of San Diego General Plan outlines plans to develop a diverse range of recreation programs that are sensitive to and consider community needs, interests, and financial resources. A targeted focus for equitable parks and programming for older adults is also detailed.
 - The Parks Master Plan identifies senior programming as a priority.

Civic Engagement

- An objective within the “Healthy and Complete Communities” goal in the SANDAG Coordinated Transportation Plan is to “create great places for everyone to live, work, and play.”
- The voting rate for City of San Diego residents is lower (50.3%) than the Median US Neighborhood (55.6%). ³
- Residents of the City of San Diego have more access to high-speed, low-cost internet access (61.1%), compared to Median US Neighborhood (14.6%). ⁴
- The City of San Diego welcomes a range of volunteers in various departments, including Parks and Recreation, Library, Police, and Fire-Rescue.
- The County of San Diego, through the Age Well San Diego Action Plan, adopted several social participation goals in 2018:
 - Create policies and practices that facilitate intergenerational engagement and the development of shared spaces for intergenerational activity.
 - Implement and expand recreational and educational programming that is safe, dementia-friendly, and diverse.
 - Create and implement a targeted social support outreach, engagement, and education plan, especially for those who are isolated.
 - Develop leadership and empowerment opportunities for aging adults.

What We Will Do

- **Goal 1.1:** Expand recreation and social activities for older adults to support healthy aging.

- **Objectives:**
 - Evaluate current programs offered for City of San Diego older adults and identify gaps.
 - Expand fitness, education, creative arts, and social gathering opportunities for older adults.
 - Promote recreation and social activities for older adults.
- **Goal 1.2:** Help bridge the digital divide by increasing access to technology.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Increase older adults' access to technology.
 - Educate older adults on how to use technology.
- **Goal 1.3:** Increase opportunities and improve visibility of volunteer positions for older adults.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Enhance City of San Diego volunteer infrastructure.
 - Expand inclusion and diversity of volunteer opportunities available to all older adults in the City of San Diego.
 - Promote volunteer opportunities for older adults.

Respect & Social Inclusion

Definition - Respect & Social Inclusion focuses on programs that educate and promote the valuing of ethnic and cultural diversity, encourages multigenerational interaction, and are sensitive to the needs of vulnerable individuals.

Vision - San Diego is a place where all people are consistently treated fairly and kindly regardless of sex, age, gender, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or physical ability.

What We Heard

Older adults should be valued members of our society. Developing opportunities to increase inclusion, decrease discrimination, create intergenerational connections, and gain mutual respect are essential to improving the aging experience.

Cultivate a Community of Respect & Inclusion

- Most older adults surveyed feel valued and included in activities for all ages. However, feelings of discrimination based on race, sex, and age greatly differed depending on the race of the older adult.
- Exploring ways to increase inclusion and decrease discrimination is welcomed to improve the experience of aging for all.
- Cross-cultural celebrations create opportunities for communities to gain mutual respect and understanding for fellow residents.
- Older adults reported they want to be included in community activities and special considerations need to be made for their safety and comfort.
- The COVID-19 pandemic created obstacles to being socially connected and many older adults reported feeling isolated and lonely.

Facilitate Intergenerational Interaction

- Intergenerational activities, with various ages (not just children) are viewed as important and good opportunities to share knowledge and connect.
- Interests vary greatly by individual. It is important to have a variety of opportunities to engage and connect with community members of all ages.
- Older adults would like to be respected and for society to encourage polite behavior among younger people- especially noted with accessing public transit.

What We Know

San Diego leadership has identified and is actively striving for diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community. Special consideration must be made for vulnerable populations to be represented and to decrease social isolation and loneliness which has significant health risks.

San Diego Strives for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Mayor Todd Gloria is focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the City of San

Diego. An Office of Race and Equity was established in June 2020 and the first Chief Race and Equity Officer was appointed in July 2021.⁵

- The City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture has launched the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative. A three-part initiative to assess the City's successes and deficits and ensure that the Commission is equipped to provide public sector work within the city's diverse communities.⁶
- The City of San Diego General Plan includes policies which support efforts to provide those with disabilities access to the most current technologies and expand access to digital information and the internet.
- The Office of the City Attorney is committed to Diversity & Inclusion and has a structured Committee for Diversity & Inclusion.⁷
- The City of San Diego does not currently have a structured, active advocacy group for older adults such as a Commission on Aging.

Health Risks of Isolation and Loneliness

- Loneliness and social isolation in older adults are serious public health risks.⁸
 - Social Isolation significantly increased a person's risk of premature death from all causes, a risk that may rival those of smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.
 - Social isolation was associated with about a 50% increased risk of dementia.
 - Poor social relationships (characterized by social isolation or loneliness) were associated with a 29% increased risk of heart disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke.
 - Loneliness was associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide.
 - Loneliness among heart failure patients was associated with a nearly four times increased risk of death, 68% increased risk of hospitalization, and a 57% increased risk of emergency department visits.⁹
- The CDC reports that current research suggests that immigrant and LGBT populations experience loneliness more often than other groups.

What We Will Do

- **Goal 1.1:** Equitable access to City services, public parks, libraries, and recreation facilities while recognizing and celebrating diversity.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Work towards the City of San Diego becoming a national leader in social equity.
 - Increase diversity of locations at which structured social opportunities are offered.
 - Encourage activities celebrating diversity in the community.
- **Goal 1.2:** Develop new and enhance existing opportunities for intergenerational activities that include older adults.
 - **Objectives:**

- Widen the programmatic reach of existing intergenerational activities.
- Promote and explore both existing and future intergenerational activities.
- **Goal 1.3:** Expand overall integration, visibility, and consideration of older adults in City activities and services.
 - **Objectives:**
 - City activities and services will be designed and marketed with an age-friendly lens.
 - Encourage age-friendly customer service and integrate older adults' voices in City activities and services.

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Housing

Definition - Housing looks at the availability of home modification programs for aging in place as well as a range of age-friendly housing options.

Vision - San Diego is a city that supports one's ability to choose a place to age with opportunities for safe, affordable, and appropriately designed housing in neighborhoods with access to services.

What We Heard

San Diegans enjoy the community they live in and desire to age in their own homes. Housing concerns include affordability, accessibility, and livability of the limited housing stock available in the city.

Significant Preference to Age in Own Home

- A large majority of individuals want to remain in their own homes to age (also known as Aging in Place/Community) within the communities they are familiar with and connected to.
- Having community resources within walking distance is desirable.
- Residents identified that having access to a variety of in-home assistance could be very helpful to remain at home as daily functioning begins to decline.
- Home safety modifications are necessary in adapting a home to changing needs, yet older adults report there are not enough trusted and affordable service providers.

Older Adults Need Greater Access to Appropriate Housing

- Affordable housing, which is also perceived as safe and livable, is not sufficiently available in San Diego.
- Individuals want assistance identifying housing options and neighborhoods in which affordable and/or accessible homes are available.
- Older adults are concerned with not having enough income to keep up with rising costs. The ultimate fear for some is becoming homeless.

What We Know

The City of San Diego is the eighth-largest city (population) in the country, second largest city in the state and has a high cost of living. The City strives to create appropriate and affordable housing opportunities; however, the production has not kept up with the demand.

San Diego Livability Factors

- The City of San Diego has been identified as one of the least affordable cities in the United States.¹⁰
- The City of San Diego had a 2019 estimated population of 1,420,571. Of those, 441,305 are over the age of 50, representing 31% of the population.¹¹
- In 2020, 4,870 individuals were experiencing homelessness in the City of San Diego.

- Of those, approximately a quarter were 55+ years old. ¹²
- The SANDAG Coordinated Transportation Plan identified creating “Healthy and Complete Communities” as an overarching vision. These complete communities include a supply and variety of housing types, affordable for people of all ages and income levels, in areas with frequent transit service and with access to a variety of services.
 - The County of San Diego, through the 2018 Age Well San Diego Action Plan, adopted a housing goal to “develop comprehensive supports associated with housing for successfully aging in community.”

Housing Resources

- According to the 2020 Housing Inventory Annual Report, an estimated 530,000 total units are available in the City of San Diego. The City’s housing production has not kept pace with the demand. ¹³
- The City of San Diego General Plan includes policies which strive to create and promote an array of housing options and support programs for vulnerable and special needs populations.
- The San Diego Housing Commission helps individuals/families with no to low income in the City of San Diego obtain housing that they can afford. ¹⁴
- In 2019, the City of San Diego released a Companion Unit Handbook to guide homeowners seeking to construct an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) on their property to increase the supply of housing for low and middle-income residents. ¹⁵

What We Will Do

- **Goal 1.1:** All residents have access to housing transition options across all income and accessibility levels.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Support and incentivize access to affordable/livable housing, increasing the housing stock in the City of San Diego for older adults.
 - Increase universal design housing options and knowledge of minor home safety modifications.
 - Promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), including accessible units.
- **Goal 1.2:** Neighborhoods are safe and have convenient nearby amenities (parks, libraries, etc.).
 - **Objectives:**
 - Increase lighting, specifically near homes, businesses, and along sidewalks.
 - Improve walkability and access to transit to create "complete neighborhoods."
 - Create and activate neighborhood amenities, such as pocket parks and plazas.
- **Goal 1.3:** Older adults have the choice and ability to age comfortably where they

choose, have access to necessary services (such as: food, transportation, medical) and feel a sense of community and connection.

- **Objectives:**

- Enhance education about housing options and housing services available in the City of San Diego.
- Promote, support, and partner with organizations which provide in-home services to older adults.

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Transportation

Definition- Transportation focuses on safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation.

Vision- San Diego is a city where all people have accessible transportation that is reliable, affordable, and safe to travel to where they want and need to go.

What We Heard

Many older adults in the City of San Diego currently drive themselves to places they want to go. However, they are very concerned about having safe, affordable, easy to access mobility options going forward as they age. Among their suggestions to help make the current transportation system more age-friendly include increased signage, lighting, and traffic calming measures; hazard-free roadways that take into account bicycles and scooters.

Older Adult Mobility Concerns

- A majority of older adults currently drive themselves in private automobiles and have concerns about the lack of transportation options available to them when they are no longer able to drive safely.
- As mobility declines, accessing public transportation becomes increasingly difficult. Older adults want specialized transit available for door to door, on-demand transit.
- Individuals want to have transit options which are flexible, timely, safe, affordable, and accessible.
- Older adults have safety concerns about utilizing public transit. Additional security, lighting, driver sensitivity training, access to restrooms, and bus stops with covers and benches will increase personal comfort.

Inclusive Transportation System

- Roadways, for the most part, are clear of obstacles and have clear signage. Adapting the environment to the increase in older drivers may include additional lighting, signage, and traffic calming measures.
- Public transportation education, including hands-on training, is needed to increase awareness and confidence in the mass transit system.
- Transportation network companies (such as Lyft) are seen as an emerging transport option, with several key barriers identified: access to devices, understanding of the technology platform, and possible safety concerns.
- Bicycle safety education and clear pathways for both the riders and drivers was identified as potential actions to take to create a safer biking experience.

What We Know

The City of San Diego has developed mobility strategies which are designed to enhance pedestrian, rider, and driver experiences, including a goal to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities. A variety of

senior transportation options exist within the City of San Diego, but often, they are limited by ZIP Code, hours of operation, type of ride, enrollment, etc.

Transit Infrastructure & Mobility Strategies

- The City of San Diego has a dynamic freeway network for automobile and public-transit access. Interstates 5, 15, 805, and State Route 75 and 163 cross the city from north to south, and Interstate 8, and State Routes 52 and 94 cross the City from east to west.
- The average speed limit on streets and freeways is higher at 32.2 miles per hour compared to the Median US Neighborhood of 28 miles per hour.¹⁶
- The City of San Diego has a Vision Zero commitment, which has a goal of zero traffic related fatalities and severe injuries by 2025.¹⁷
- The City of San Diego General Plan outlines mobility strategies which are designed to enhance pedestrian, rider, and driver experiences.

Mass Transit

- San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) provides bus and light rail (trolley) services. Nearly 100 fixed bus routes and four (4) trolley lines are offered throughout San Diego County.¹⁸
- The SANDAG Coordinated Transportation Plan outlines many goals towards strengthening the availability and improving the transit experience. A key overarching goal is to “Provide safe, secure, healthy, affordable, and convenient travel choices between the place where people live, work, and play.”

Transit Designed for Individuals with Specialized Mobility Needs

- MTS provides a paratransit option, MTS Access. MTS Access is for customers with disabilities who are unable to use the MTS fixed route bus and trolley services. Eligibility certification is mandatory prior to use.¹⁹
- MTS offers Seniors discounted rates (half price), and 30-day passes that start at \$23 for individuals over the age of 65 to ride public transit.
- A variety of senior transportation options exist within the City of San Diego. Often, they are limited by zip code, hours of operation, type of ride, enrollment, etc. The Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) in San Diego is FACT. They are available to help match transit services to individuals’ personal needs.

What We Will Do

4. **Goal 1.1:** Expand mobility choices throughout the City of San Diego, including alternative transportation methods, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, contributing to a regional approach.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Expand and increase citywide bicycle ridership.
 - Increase community confidence in public transit ridership.
 - Support and educate on alternative transportation methods.
 - **Goal 1.2:** Strive for all forms of transit, including active transit (biking, walking, etc.)

to be accessed safely.

- **Objectives:**

- Reduce all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by applying traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds.
- Educate San Diego older adults on transportation safety trainings.
- Ensure adequate lighting, signage, and hazard free roadways, pathways, and sidewalks.

- **Goal 1.3:** Expand transportation options designed for older adults and promote their use.

- **Objectives:**

- View transportation systems not only as a method of moving about the County but also as a means for older adults to stay connected to the community.
- Educate the older adult community on various transportation options and ADA transit certification process.
- Ensure that older adults have access to appropriate transit in all San Diego communities.

Community Health & Wellness

Definition- Community Health & Wellness focuses on access to programs and services that promote wellness, safety, and active living.

Vision- All San Diego residents live long and healthy lives with vitality. San Diego is a city where all residents know about and practice personal wellness to live their best life. Its residents know how to access healthcare and support services that increase health and well-being.

What We Heard

Personal health, wellness, and education are important to San Diegans. Older adults value access to support services, are mindful of safety, and desire to have service professionals trained and systems designed with them in mind as the end user.

Provide Preventative Screening, Safety, & Education

- The community values health and wellness screenings.
- Recognizing that falls are a leading cause of injury for older adults, additional fall prevention awareness, training, and resources are needed.
- Conversations about resources and recommendations on where to find them from peers proved to be a dynamic exchange. More structured informational sessions, support, and resource brokerage for older adults will be helpful.
- Overall personal safety, specifically after dark, is a concern for older adults.

Help Older Adults Access Services

- Food insecurity is a complex issue for some of the aging community in San Diego. Participants spoke about feelings of embarrassment in requesting help. Increased outreach with dignity in mind, innovative program design, and access to additional fresh and healthy food is needed.
- There is a perception that there are not enough service professionals (medical and community) that are knowledgeable in memory and cognitive impairments to meet the growing demand and shift in our society. Older adults also want to be better informed to prevent, support, and care for individuals with memory and cognitive impairments.
- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, older adults are concerned about emergency response and support available for individuals who need additional assistance.
- The reliance on internet-based communication and access to services/information highlighted the “digital divide” in some communities—creating a pressing need for additional access to devices and training.

What We Know

San Diego is a dynamic urban city with a vast network of community health resources. Several

county-wide free services strive to connect people to resources and promote a high quality of life for older adults.

Community Health Resources

- The City of San Diego is home to several major hospitals, health care systems, and a network of community clinics.
- 2-1-1 San Diego is a free service that connects people of all ages with community, health, and disaster services. Trained call center representatives are available 24 hours per day by calling 2-1-1 or the more than 6,000 community services can be accessed on-line.²⁰
- County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services (AIS) operates a free call center, 1-800-339-4661, for assistance with resources for older adults and persons with disabilities. AIS also hosts a yearly county-wide older adult “Vital Aging” conference.²¹
- The San Diego County Senior Health Report prioritizes cultivating opportunities for all people and communities to grow, connect, and enjoy the highest quality of life.

San Diegan Health Concerns

- The social determinants of health that frequently impact older adults are isolation and loneliness.²²
- Alzheimer’s disease is the sixth leading cause of death in the U.S. and the third leading cause of death in California and San Diego County.²³
- The City of San Diego has a lower prevalence rate of smoking (13.6%) as compared to the Median US Neighborhood (20.5%).²⁴
- The City of San Diego has a lower obesity rate (22%) as compared to the Median US Neighborhood (28.9%).²⁵
- The average number of unhealthy air quality days is significantly higher at 40.7, compared to the Median US Neighborhood of 5.7.²⁶(AARP Livability Index)
- The social determinants of health impact both the quality and longevity of life.

Community Safety

- The City of San Diego manages Community Development Block Grants that are used to prevent and eliminate neighborhood blight and alleviate serious and immediate threats to health and welfare.²⁷
- More than 80% of the emergency calls to the Fire-Rescue Department are for medical aids.²⁸
- In 2020, there were 5,303 violent crimes and 24,321 property crimes in the City of San Diego.²⁹
- The San Diego County Senior Health Report states that residents must be protected from crime and abuse, neighborhoods are safe, and communities are resilient to disasters and emergencies.

What We Will Do

- **Goal 1.1:** Promote awareness and knowledge of available and accessible health and well-being related resources.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Promote community health and wellness services, events, and education.
 - Enhance education about personal emergency preparedness and the City/County emergency services.
- **Goal 1.2:** Expand the scope and number of City of San Diego Parks and Recreation sponsored/co-hosted health related events, programs, and activities to educate and improve physical and mental health.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Increase the number of older adult programs, seasonal activities, and events that foster health and wellness.
 - Decrease isolation and loneliness among older adults.
 - Facilitate access to training and awareness of dementia and mild cognitive impairments.
- **Goal 1.3:** Align with the City's Complete Communities initiative in creating healthy communities with access to support and healthcare services.
 - **Objectives:**
 - Develop and implement practices for responding to identified need for healthcare and support services.
 - Create pathways for older adults to easily access food.

Call to Action

This Action Plan outlines the goals, tasks, potential activities, and timeframes to be accomplished over the next few years by elected officials, municipal staff, city residents and numerous community/civic organizations working together for a common goal—to make the City of San Diego an even more vibrant and equitable place to live for all ages. The city has many assets to draw on, including plans, processes, and programs for older adults already in place, a capable and dedicated set of partners who are City staff and community leaders, plus a vibrant older adult population dedicated to bringing the vision to reality.

Once the Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan is approved by City Council, it will be time to move from discussing and planning to collaborating and doing! As noted in the timeline, some actions are already underway, while others will need to be planned for, with strategic implementation to follow. There is a vital role for all City departments and community organizations to work together on the wide variety of tasks, along with community residents.

How can you help build an Age Friendly San Diego?

Civic and Community Leaders:

- Align your organization's five-year vision with this Action Plan
- Direct your agency/department or organization to plan and implement actions that reflect your contribution to the Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan
 - Identify staffing and resources needed to implement specific actions
 - Continue to build on what is working
 - Engage in bold innovation
- Actively coordinate with civic and community leader counterparts for an annual progress report to City Council
- Continue to be informed by the voice and influence of older San Diegans

San Diegans of all Ages:

- Get involved!
- Make your voice heard!

Please look for meeting announcements so you are informed and can participate. Announcements will be posted online on the City of San Diego's website www.sandiego.gov/AgeWell, via the City's social media outlets, Community Recreation Centers, and the library system.

Share the Age Friendly San Diego Action Plan with your family, friends, neighbors and others. A vibrant, equitable, livable San Diego serves all ages today, tomorrow and in the years to come. This plan has the potential to shape a bright, optimistic future for everyone.

Thank you for reviewing this Action Plan. If you have any comments you would like to share, please click on this [LINK](#).

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(Add Logos down this side)

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